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# *The Center for Polar Archives*



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE  
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20408

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(Wilkes) Expedition, 1838-42; observations in high latitudes by ship captains in response to Matthew Fontaine Maury's program of compiling nautical and related charts while he was Superintendent of the Navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments; the ill-fated exploring expedition of the U.S.S. *Jeannette* in the ice of the Arctic Ocean, 1879-82; and the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition under Adolphus W. Greely, 1881-84, conducted as part of the U.S. contribution to the first international polar year. Recent Government-sponsored activity in the polar regions has included the pioneering U.S. Navy flights in northwestern Greenland and Ellesmere Island by Richard E. Byrd in 1925; the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition, 1939-41, under the command of Byrd; and the many and varied activities of the U.S. Navy, Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Weather Bureau, and other Government agencies in the Arctic during the 1940's and 1950's. Among such activities were those at Camp Century in Greenland and at the scientific stations on floating ice islands, those during the Ptarmigan flights to the pole, and those at the DEW line and JAWS stations. More recent activities have included the complete transect of the Arctic Ocean in 1958 by the nuclear submarine U.S.S. *Nautilus* under William R. Anderson and the continuing antarctic research programs of the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Naval Support Force, Antarctica, since 1955.

Equally important have been the private expeditions and scientific research activities that often pioneered the way to successful investigations of polar environments. Among these were the voyages of the early sealers, whalers, and China traders; the first two expeditions of Charles Francis Hall to the Arctic in the 1860's; Robert E. Peary's painstaking, carefully planned explorations for reaching the North Pole, 1885-1909; Byrd's 1926 flight to the North Pole from Spitsbergen and his expeditions to Antarctica in 1928 and 1933; the important voyages of exploration



The U.S.S. *Polaris* fast in the ice off northwestern Greenland during the expedition commanded by Charles Francis Hall, 1871-73. This is a photograph of a painting by H. J. Morgan from sketches made in the field by members of the expedition. The painting and sketches are among the holdings of the Center for Polar Archives, National Archives.

into the North American and Greenland Arctic by Robert A. Bartlett, Louise A. Boyd, Lincoln Ellsworth, Donald B. MacMillan, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, and Hubert Wilkins; and the last private U.S. expedition to Antarctica—the Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition, 1946-48. To these should be added the varied scientific programs of private organizations, such as the American Geographical Society, the National Geographic Society, and the Arctic Institute of North America.

### *Holdings of the Center for Polar Archives*

The National Archives and its Center for Polar Archives contain the richest sources available for information on the history of U.S. activities in the Arctic and the Antarctic from the 18th century to the present.

Included among the official records of the U.S. Government in the Center, for example, are



records of the U.S. Naval Support Force, Antarctica, 1955-58; the Arctic Branch of the Arctic, Desert, and Tropic Information Center, 1943-45; the U.S. Naval Observatory, 1860-75; the Office of Antarctic Programs, National Science Foundation, 1955-65; and the U.S. Antarctic Service, 1939-41. Among the private papers are those of Carl R. Eklund, August Howard, Charles J. Hubbard, Palle Mogenson, Robert E. Peary, Finn Ronne, Harold E. Saunders, Paul A. Siple, George E. Tyson, and Robert W. Wood.

These records and papers include correspondence, biographical information, scientific and other observational data, journals, diaries, personal accounts, reports, memoranda, manuscript research papers and printed publications, maps and charts, still pictures, aerial photographs, sound recordings and motion pictures, and sketches and paintings.

Polar-related information in the National Archives may be found in approximately 50 record groups. Especially rich are those that describe U.S. Navy exploration and research. These are among records of the Hydrographic Office, the Naval Observatory, the Office of Naval Records and Library, and Naval Operating Forces. Further information on exploration and research may be found among the U.S. Coast Guard records. Early scientific polar data are among records of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Weather Bureau, and the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Information of a descriptive and administrative nature is found with records of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, the Office of Territories, and the Bureau of Insular Affairs.

### *Objectives and Functions of the Center for Polar Archives*

The primary goal of the Center is to collect and preserve official Government polar records and private papers of persons engaged in polar activity. Since the preservation of records and papers is useless unless they are used for research,

an equally important goal is the facilitation of their use. In order to achieve this, the staff of the Center arranges and describes the records and papers in its holdings.

In addition, the Center staff identifies pertinent polar records in other divisions of the National Archives and in other Government agencies and private depositories. Also, it is compiling a comprehensive list and a documentary history of all U.S. polar expeditions and programs.

The Center replies to verbal and written requests for information about its holdings and related records, including those in the National Archives. A research room and a special library are available to searchers who want to work with the unrestricted records and papers in the Center.

### *Gifts of Private Papers*

The Center accepts gifts of private papers that pertain to U.S. polar exploration and studies. Because of its extensive holdings of Federal polar records and its optimum physical environment in the National Archives Building, the Center for Polar Archives is an ideal depository for private collections of papers relating to the polar regions. The papers are kept in the Center's stack area, which is protected by fire walls and by automatically controlled temperature, humidity, and alarm systems. Absence of windows in the stack area prevents the fading of documents in sunlight.

Donors may impose restrictions on the use of materials given to the Center for Polar Archives. The conditions may provide that, for a period mutually acceptable to the Archives and the donor, the papers are to be examined only upon the specific authorization of the donor, or that for a time the papers will be withheld from public use, or that literary property rights will be reserved by the donor.

The National Archives will submit for the donor's signature a formal instrument of gift embodying any reasonable conditions that the



donor may impose. Instructions for the shipment of papers, at the expense of the National Archives, will be sent upon application to the Center for Polar Archives, National Archives, Washington, D.C. 20408.

After the papers have been received, they are reviewed and arranged in accordance with a plan for their most effective preservation and use. A detailed description is then prepared for staff use and authorized distribution.







*research procedures  
and regulations*



*règlements et méthodes  
pour la recherche*

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The procedures and regulations as set forth here are designed to permit the fullest use of our research facilities while affording reasonable safeguards for the documents in our custody. The cooperation of researchers is requested. *Any violation of these regulations may result in the cancellation of research privileges.*

## **Admission**

Anyone wishing to do serious historical research may use the facilities of the Archives. (Under-graduate students are admitted if it is necessary for their studies, provided they present a letter from their professor to that effect.) Researchers must sign a register of attendance with the Commissionaire on duty when entering or leaving the building. The Commissionaire may examine brief cases and parcels of persons as they leave.

The resources of the Archives are divided into four divisions: the Public Archives Library on the second floor (Room 239); the Manuscript Division and the Picture Division on the third floor; and the Map Division on the fourth floor. To use the facilities of any of the Divisions, researchers must register in person with the Division during office hours, that is, from 8.30 to 4.50, Monday to Friday, except during the Summer when closing time is 4.10. Registrations terminate half an hour before closing time.

## **Map Division and Picture Division**

The research facilities of the Map and Picture Divisions are only available to researchers during office hours. Researchers may consult catalogues, indexes, and other finding aids in the Division where they will be assisted by the reference staff. Access to the stacks is prohibited. The material should be requested on the forms provided and examined at the tables or in the location designated for that purpose. Maps or pictures may be reserved from day to day; when they are no longer needed, the reference staff should be notified.

## **Manuscript Division**

At the time of registration in the Reference Room of the Manuscript Division, a pass is granted to accredited researchers allowing them access to the Search Room twenty-four hours a day. The pass is held on file by the Commissionaire. A reader card is given to the researcher, and a locker is assigned if necessary.

The reference staff will direct the researcher to the catalogues, indexes and other finding aids, and will help and advise on sources. When preparing a list of the documents required, the researcher should ascertain if

Les règlements et le mode de consultation indiqués plus bas ont pour but l'utilisation rationnelle des locaux, de l'équipement et des instruments de recherche mis à la disposition des chercheurs, et la préservation des documents sous notre garde. Nous comptons sur la collaboration de tous. *Toute infraction à ces règlements peut amener l'annulation du privilège de consulter ces documents.*

## **Admission**

Les Archives publiques sont ouvertes à ceux qui se proposent de mener des recherches historiques sérieuses. Les étudiants qui n'ont pas encore obtenu leur baccalauréat ne sont admis que si leurs études l'exigent, et sur présentation d'une lettre de leur professeur à cette fin.

Les chercheurs doivent, à l'entrée et à la sortie, signer le registre des présences conservé par le huissier. Celui-ci est autorisé à examiner le contenu des serviettes ou paquets des chercheurs à leur sortie de l'édifice.

Les Archives comprennent quatre divisions: la Bibliothèque des Archives au deuxième (Bureau 239), la Division des manuscrits et la Division des gravures et photos au troisième, la Division des cartes et plans au quatrième.

Les chercheurs doivent s'inscrire dans chacune des divisions où ils désirent effectuer des recherches. Il peuvent le faire durant les heures normales de travail, soit du lundi au vendredi de 8h30 à 16h50 (de 8h30 à 16h10 durant l'été), sauf durant la demi-heure précédant la fermeture.

## **Division des cartes et plans Division des gravures et photos**

Les documents conservés par ces deux divisions ne peuvent être consultés que durant les heures de travail. Des catalogues, index et autres instruments de recherche sont à la disposition des chercheurs, et le personnel donnera les renseignements et les indications utiles. Il est interdit de pénétrer dans les magasins. La demande de documents se fait par fiches de déplacement. On est prié d'étudier les documents aux tables ou dans le local réservé à cet usage. Le lecteur peut demander de retenir pour le lendemain les pièces en communication. Une fois la consultation terminée, en aviser la personne affectée à la communication.

## **Division des manuscrits**

L'inscription se fait dans la Salle des inventaires de la Division. On accorde aux chercheurs autorisés un laissez-passer qui leur donne accès aux salles de lecture, vingt-quatre heures par jour, sept jours par semaine. Ce laissez-passer est valide pour une période de trois mois au plus, mais il est renouvelable sur demande. Le huissier le conserve dans ses dossiers. Le chercheur



access to any of the documents he wants to consult is restricted in any way.

Upon presentation of his reader card at the circulation desk in the Search Room he must request documents on prescribed forms. Access to the stacks is not permitted. Application for material should not be made in the half hour preceding closing time. Material signed out at one time should not be more than the capacity of a locker or include more than 12 reels of microfilm.

Researchers receiving material may take it to any of the unoccupied tables in the general reading room, the microfilm room or the quiet room. When studying documents, only one box of manuscripts should be used at one time. In boxes containing file folders, only one file should be removed at a time. Loose pages should not be removed from a box or a folder and under no circumstances should the order of pages or files be disturbed.

When the researcher leaves the research area, he must return his manuscript material or microfilm to the circulation desk or place it in the locker assigned. Material signed out should be returned promptly when no longer required. If material in a locker is required temporarily by another person, it may be removed by the circulation staff. In such a case, a note of explanation will be left in the locker.

Persons who are not familiar with microfilm readers should request assistance at the circulation desk. Care must be exercised to ensure that the film remains in good condition. Any damage to film must be reported immediately. Each reel must be re-wound on its original spool and replaced in its box before a second box is opened. Whenever a reader is not in use, even temporarily, the light must be switched off.

## **Public Archives Library**

At the time of registration in the Reference Room of the Archives Library, a pass may be granted to accredited researchers who wish to use the Search Room. This pass allows them access to the Search Room twenty-four hours a day. It is issued for a period of up to three months but may be extended on request. The pass is held on file by the Commissionnaire. A library reader card is given to the researcher.

The reference staff will assist in the consultation of catalogues and finding aids and advise on sources. Researchers can use the reference books in the Reference Room only. Access to the stacks is prohibited. Books may be obtained from the loan desk by presenting the reader card and the prescribed request forms. Such requests should not be made during the half hour preceding closing time. No more than 12 volumes may be signed out at one time.

The reader should look at his books in the Reference Room of the Library and bring to the Search Room on the third floor only those which need to be kept longer.

reçoit, pour sa part, une carte de lecteur, et une case lui est assignée, au besoin.

Le chercheur peut consulter les instruments de recherche, catalogues, inventaires, index, et obtenir l'aide du personnel pour la bonne marche de ses travaux. Il sera alors en mesure de préparer la liste, avec leurs cotes, des documents dont il aura besoin. Il pourra s'informer s'il existe des réserves quant à la communication de ces documents.

Il se rendra ensuite à la Salle de lecture, présentera sa carte de lecteur et demandera les documents désirés par fiches de déplacement. Aucune demande ne doit être faite durant la demi-heure qui précède la fermeture. L'accès aux magasins est interdit. Les emprunts doivent se limiter à la capacité d'une case, et ne pas comprendre plus de 12 bobines de microfilm.

Sur réception des documents demandés, le chercheur peut utiliser l'une des tables inoccupées dans la Salle de lecture générale, la Salle de lecture des microfilms, ou la troisième salle où l'usage des machines à écrire est interdit.

Lors de la consultation, le lecteur ne devra utiliser qu'un carton ou qu'un dossier à la fois, et ne jamais retirer une page d'un carton ou d'un dossier. Il ne doit jamais intervertir l'ordre des pages ou des dossiers.

En quittant la salle de lecture, il ne doit pas laisser les documents sur les tables, mais les remettre au comptoir de prêts ou les placer dans sa case.

Les documents doivent être retournés après qu'ils ont servi.

La Division pourra retirer des cases les documents dont on a temporairement besoin. Dans le cas d'un retrait, un mot d'explication est laissé dans la case.

Quiconque ignore le fonctionnement des lecteurs de microfilm doit s'adresser à la personne de service au comptoir de prêts. Eviter d'endommager les films. Tout film endommagé doit être signalé au préposé. Il faut rouler chaque film sur sa bobine d'origine et le replacer dans son carton avant d'ouvrir un second carton. Quand le lecteur de microfilm n'est pas utilisé, même pour quelques minutes, il faut éteindre la lumière.

## **Bibliothèque des Archives**

Au moment de l'inscription dans la Salle de référence de la bibliothèque des Archives, on accorde aux chercheurs autorisés un laissez-passer qui leur donne accès aux salles de lecture, vingt-quatre heures par jour, sept jours par semaine. Il est valide pour une période ne dépassant pas trois mois, mais il est renouvelable sur demande. Le huissier le conserve dans ses dossiers. Le chercheur reçoit, pour sa part, une carte de lecteur. Le personnel de la référence fournit aux chercheurs tous les renseignements utiles pour la bonne marche de leurs travaux.

Les chercheurs ne peuvent utiliser les usuels (ouvrages de référence, dictionnaires, etc.) que dans la Salle de référence de la bibliothèque. L'accès aux magasins est prohibé. Le chercheur présente sa carte de lecture



Books should not be read in the lobbies.

When no longer required, books should be returned to the loan desk of the library during the day; at night they may be left on a table in the Search Room. On leaving the building, the researcher should place books required for further reference on the shelves provided for this purpose.

## Duplication of material

If photoduplication is required, a request may be made in the Division for a requisition form and a price list.

Items to be duplicated should be listed, preferably when research is completed, and the list handed to the staff at the circulation desk or the reference staff. Lists must be legible, with items listed in consecutive order and full references given. A separate requisition form should be completed for each type of photoduplication requested.

Authorization for photoduplication will not be granted if there is danger that it will cause damage to the material.

Researchers are not permitted to use their own photoduplication equipment.

The Public Archives reserves the right to limit the amount of photoduplication which can be undertaken for individual researchers at one time. The Manuscript Division is unable to accept orders in excess of 250 pages.

## General Regulations

Under no circumstances may manuscript or printed material, maps or pictures be taken out of the building. All material must be handled carefully. No marking or folding of pages is permitted. Tracing is prohibited. Only pieces of paper should be used as book marks.

There is a cafeteria for the staff and for visitors in the north-west section of the fifth floor. There is also an automated lunch room in the north-east corner of the first basement. Food and beverages may not be consumed anywhere else in the building.

Smoking is permitted only in the lobbies on the several floors.

The Public Archives is not responsible for personal property left in the building.

et demande les volumes requis par fiches de déplacement. Aucune demande ne doit être faite durant la demi-heure qui précède la fermeture. Les emprunts doivent se limiter à 12 volumes à la fois.

Les livres doivent être lus soit dans la Salle de référence, soit dans l'une des salles de lecture au troisième, non pas dans les halls.

On remet les livres dont on n'a plus besoin, le jour, au comptoir de prêts de la bibliothèque. Le soir, on les laisse sur une table dans la Salle de lecture. En quittant l'édifice, ranger sur les rayons de la Salle de lecture les volumes dont on peut encore avoir besoin.

## Reproduction de documents

Si on désire des reproductions, se procurer une formule de commande et la table des tarifs de l'une des divisions. Préparer avec soin la liste des reproductions désirées, de préférence lorsque les recherches sont terminées. Sur la liste, les documents doivent être en ordre, et les références précises et complètes. La liste sera remise au comptoir de prêts de la Bibliothèque ou des Manuscrits, suivant le cas, ou au personnel affecté à la référence dans la Division des cartes et la Division des gravures. Une liste séparée doit être préparée pour chaque type de reproduction.

La reproduction de documents fragiles ne sera autorisée que s'il n'y a pas danger d'endommager ceux-ci.

Il n'est pas permis aux chercheurs d'utiliser leurs propres appareils reproducteurs.

Les Archives publiques se réservent le droit de limiter le nombre des reproductions à fournir à chaque chercheur. La Division des manuscrits n'accepte pas les commandes de plus de 250 pages.

## Règlements généraux

Il n'est jamais permis de sortir de l'édifice des manuscrits, des livres, des cartes ou des gravures. Tout document doit être manipulé avec soin. Il est strictement défendu de marquer ou de plier les documents. Le calque des documents est prohibé. On ne doit utiliser que des bouts de papier comme signets.

Les chercheurs peuvent utiliser la cafétéria située dans la section nord-ouest du cinquième et l'automate situé dans la section nord-est du premier sous-sol. Il est défendu de consommer des aliments en tout autre endroit de l'édifice.

Il est également défendu de fumer sauf dans les halls au centre de l'édifice.

Les Archives ne sont pas responsables des effets personnels laissés dans l'édifice.